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City Heights Landlord Ordered to Clean up Properties

City Attorney Uses Code Enforcement to Revitalize Communities

San Diego, CA (October 16, 1998) -- A City Heights property owner, whose rental properties were eyesores in the community, must pay several thousand dollars in fines and bring his property up to code as a result of a successful criminal prosecution by City Attorney Casey Gwinn's Code Enforcement Unit.

On October 15, 1998, property owner, Teera Kasicharernvt, was sentenced, after pleading no contest to twenty crimes involving maintaining substandard properties in violation of the San Diego Municipal Code. San Diego Municipal Court Judge Leo Valentine, Jr., placed the defendant on three years of probation conditioned upon his paying fines totaling \$3200. The defendant must also bring his properties into compliance with the law to the satisfaction of City inspectors within 120 days, or he faces the possibility of additional fines and custody.

At the sentencing, Deputy City Attorney Tricia Johnson, of the City Attorney's Code Enforcement Unit, showed the Court photographs of substandard rental units, owned by the defendant, that had unsafe electrical wiring, improperly installed plumbing, and units constructed in a manner that did not comply with the uniform building code. At the time the criminal complaint was first filed in this case, the conditions at the defendant's 17 properties, including 23 rental units in City Heights, were deplorable. Since that time, Kasicharernvat has made significant improvements to the properties, greatly improving the living conditions of his tenants, who are mostly recent immigrants to this country.

This case attracted the interest of community groups in the City Heights area, where residents, businesses, and law enforcement officials are working in partnership to improve the community. "Our Code Enforcement Unit is committed to enforcing the laws governing minimum building, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical standards," City Attorney Casey Gwinn said. "We will not tolerate landlords subjecting their tenants to substandard housing conditions."

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